

SENATE—Wednesday, September 29, 1999

The Senate met at 10:01 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The guest Chaplain, Father Paul Lavin, pastor, St. Joseph's Catholic Church on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC, will now lead us in prayer.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Father Paul Lavin, offered the following prayer:

In the book of Tobit we hear:

Thank God! Give Him the praise and glory. Before all the living, acknowledge the many good things He has done for you, by blessing and extolling His name in song. Before all men, honor and proclaim God's deeds, and do not be slack in praising Him. A king's secret it is prudent to keep, but the works of God are to be declared and made known. Praise them with due honor. Do good, and evil will not find its way to you. Prayer and fasting are good, but better than either is almsgiving accompanied by righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than abundance with wickedness.

Let us Pray.

Blessed are You, Lord God of mercy. You have given us a marvelous example of charity and the great commandment of love for one another. Send down Your blessings on these Your servants in the United States Senate. May they generously devote themselves to the good of our Nation and to helping others. When they are called on in times of need, let them faithfully serve You and their neighbor.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable ROD GRAMS, a Senator from the State of Minnesota, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMS). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, before our distinguished President pro tempore leaves the floor, I wish to make a comment or two about how good it is to see Senator THURMOND looking so

well. He had a recent bout with the doctors. I had a bout with the doctors not too long ago myself. But notwithstanding that, Senator THURMOND, our distinguished President pro tempore, is here every morning to open the Senate. I know he was occupied yesterday in the early evening signing the continuing resolution and attended a Bible study group in my hideaway, presided over by a distinguished Biblical scholar. Senator THURMOND was there participating, and I just wanted to make a comment how sharp Senator THURMOND looks today and how good it is to see him opening the Senate.

Mr. THURMOND. Congratulations on your Bible study.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Senator.

SCHEDULE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I have been asked to announce that today the Senate will immediately begin consideration of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill. Amendments to the bill are expected to be offered. Therefore, Senators may expect votes throughout the day and into the evening. Senators who intend to offer amendments should let us know as promptly as possible. Based on the number of amendments which are anticipated so far, it is possible we could finish action on the bill today. In any event, action on the bill must be finished before the close of Senate business tomorrow so that the Senate will have acted on all of the appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year, September 30.

As always, Senators will be notified as early as possible as votes are scheduled. Senator LOTT has asked for notification that the Senate may also consider any conference reports available for action.

I thank my colleagues for their attention in this matter.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Also, under the previous order, the motion to proceed to the consideration of S. 1650 is agreed to.

The clerk will report the bill by title. The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1650) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to permit Dr. Jack Chow, Mr. Mark Laisch, and Jane MacDonald to be present in the Chamber during consideration of this bill.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, the bill on which we are now proceeding allocates some \$91.7 billion for the three Departments—the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Labor. It is an increase of \$4 billion over the program levels for fiscal year 1999. Most of that money is taken up by additional funding for the Department of Education, \$2.3 billion, and an increase in the National Institutes of Health, \$2 billion.

This bill is very close to the President's mark. It is within \$1.4 billion of the President's mark. It contains advance funding for programs that are currently forward funded of some \$16.46 billion.

Last year, the advance funding was \$8.5 billion. The advance funding, of course, is a consistent, customary practice for the appropriations process. It is worth noting that the President's suggested mark had advance funding, forward funding, in excess of some \$20 billion.

In reporting this bill out from the Appropriations Committee yesterday, I thanked our distinguished chairman, Senator STEVENS, and our distinguished ranking member, Senator BYRD, for the allocations which have enabled us to reach the floor. This appropriations bill is within the caps. My distinguished colleague, Senator TOM HARKIN, and I have cooperated on a partnership basis. Senator HARKIN and I have worked for more than a decade as chairman or ranking member, depending on which party is in power.

I learned a long time ago that if you want to get something done here in Washington, you have to be willing to cross party lines and work on a bipartisan basis. When we are dealing with the two top priorities of the country on the domestic scene—education and health care—in addition to the very important programs in the Department of Labor on worker safety and job training, a bipartisan approach is necessary. Senator HARKIN and I do